



Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: January 9, 2019

Time: 7:15 PM

Location: Town Hall Annex, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Members in Attendance: Daniel Amstutz, Wayne Chouinard, Corey Rateau, Melissa Laube, Lenard Diggins, Howard Muise, Pamela Heidell, Scott Smith, Jeffrey Maxtutis

Members Missing: Michael Gordon, Brian Kmetz, Charles Giroux

Howard Muise called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

Public Comments: *There were none.*

Administration: Minutes of December 12, 2018 were approved unanimously. The Individual Action List and Active Projects List were distributed.

Stop Signs on Hayes at Maynard/Mystic Lake:

Howard Muise referred to an updated memo by Dan Amstutz which went over the issue regarding the request for intersection control on Hayes Street. Amstutz had presented this memo at the last TAC meeting. Muise noted that there were three distinct issues at hand that neighborhood residents had brought up: lack of intersection control on Hayes at Mystic Lake Drive and Maynard Street, concerns about speeding on Hayes Street, and concerns about excessive rush hour traffic on Hayes Street.

TAC discussed the issue of intersection control first. There was discussion amongst TAC members about STOP sign warrants in the MUTCD. Wayne Chouinard noted DPW had done an intersection sight distance analysis and determined sight distance is severely constrained on the approaches to Hayes from Mystic Lake and Maynard. This makes him more comfortable establishing control at these intersections, since otherwise the volume and crash data collected by town staff is too low to meet MUTCD warrants. Amstutz said he had met with Debbie Coughlin in the morning from 7:30 AM – 8:30 AM before this meeting and observed traffic and sight distance issues. He agreed sight distance is a problem. TAC members discussed the issue with three neighborhood residents who were in attendance at the meeting. TAC members noted that STOP signs could not be installed on Hayes Street based on the MUTCD guidance. Potentially the Town could install an "intersection ahead" warning sign on Hayes Street approaching the intersections for vehicles coming from Mystic Valley Parkway and Medford Street.

Chouinard also noted some of the property fencing impedes sight distance and suggested the residents talk to their neighbors about this issue. The TAC voted to have STOP signs installed on Mystic Lake Drive and Maynard Street approaching Hayes Street. "Intersection Ahead" warning signs were not included in this vote but could be considered at a later time as the issue is monitored.

TAC discussed the issue of speeds on Hayes Street. The Town collected volume and speed data at Hayes/Maynard and found that less than 10% of vehicles were going over the 25 MPH speed limit in both directions, although the percentage was slightly higher if just counting vehicles traveling from Mystic Valley Parkway to Medford Street. Amstutz noted he did not observe speeds that he found to be excessive except for a small number of vehicles when he was out in the morning. Drivers would often come in platoons of four or five that made it difficult for them to accelerate quickly. Considering the fact that more than 90% of the drivers are traveling at or under the 25 MPH speed limit, TAC decided to take no action on this issue.

Finally, TAC discussed the issue of traffic volumes on Hayes Street. Data collected by the Town shows around 700-800 vehicles per day on Hayes Street, with around 200 vehicles in the 7-9 AM period and 200 in the 5-7 PM period traveling eastbound (to Medford Street). Therefore, the peak travel periods have much higher traffic than the rest of the day, but overall volumes are low and within an expected range for this type of roadway in Arlington. It was noted that less than 1,000 vehicles per day is normal for a local roadway. TAC determined to take no action on this issue. It was noted that the situation should be monitored and if volumes, crashes, or speeds change significantly, TAC may revisit these issues on Hayes Street.

Town Issues and Activities:

Chouinard distributed a memo on DPW project updates:

- The Arlington Center Safe Travel Project is considered complete from the state perspective. Further improvements will be done by the Town, including additional bike lane/bike path markings in spring 2019 and installation of a Blank-Out sign for Swan Place. Chouinard noted the traffic detection cameras need to be cleaned on a regular basis to work properly. Scott Smith requested that the signal timing be reviewed for the signal at Mass Ave and Swan Place, as the all-red timing is excessive.
- The design process is ongoing for the Mystic Street Bridge. The contract has been awarded and permitting is underway. Work is now expected to begin in April. There will be barriers in the middle of Mystic Street for the contractor to do their work but traffic will still be able to pass through. Parking will be temporarily removed in the project area.
- Miscellaneous items included sidewalk and ramp construction and rehabilitation – 130 ramps completed in 2018 – and the pavement condition survey that is underway. DPW is planning for two crews to do sidewalk work next year.
- Lenard Diggins asked that DPW make sure to prevent pedestrian push buttons from being plowed into during snow clearance.

Corey Rateau noted several items:

- Additional traffic supervisors have been added to assist with children walking to school.
- One supervisor has been removed at Gibbs because they were not needed, and moved to Downing Square instead.
- A second supervisor has been added at Mass Ave near Ottoson, at Appleton Place.
- The Parking Implementation/Governance Committee is working on issues such as meter collections and maintenance, and continuing parking meters along Broadway.

Daniel Amstutz noted some additional updates:

- Amstutz presented a memo to the Select Board in December on the progress of the LimeBike bike share system. The memo was included with the TAC handouts. The program has been very successful in Arlington. Right now the program has been scaled back for the winter but will return in the spring with a full complement of bike share bicycles.
- He is finishing up the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grant which is due January 11. Pedestrian improvements will be focused around the Stratton Elementary School.
- DPCD is still waiting for the full data set from the BRT Pilot, but discussed the data with Stantec earlier that day. Final analysis is showing a five minute time savings on average from the dedicated bus lane, which actually is saved for the entire length of Route 77. Moving the bus stop at Lake Street and Mass Ave appears to be saving a minute of bus travel. TAC discussed the pilot and next steps for implementation.

Pedestrian Flag Request for Library Crosswalk: Anna Litten, the Assistant Director at the Robbins Library, requested pedestrian flags for the crosswalk on Mass Ave at Water Street/Peg Spengler Way. TAC members noted that there is a lot of volume at this crosswalk, both vehicle traffic and pedestrian traffic. It also has unusual geometry. At least one parking spot was taken away to improve visibility but it is still a concern. Crosswalk flags, while making pedestrians more visible when crossing, could also make the whole crosswalk more visible. It was noted that crosswalk warning signs should be installed as well since they are not already there. The TAC voted to approve the placement of warning flags at this location. TAC members and Town staff will investigate where warning signs and flags could be placed for this crosswalk.

Crosswalk Guidelines: Muise explained the draft guidelines were updated to add in a note about what speed to use when determining sight distance for visibility, and revisions were made to clarify where parking should be prohibited near a crosswalk. It was recommended to make a small edit to the statement about multilane streets with heavy traffic to include a speed threshold of 40 mph as well. TAC voted to approve the new crosswalk guidelines.

Amend TAC By-Laws to Fill Officer Vacancies. Muise presented an amendment to the TAC by-laws to fill officer vacancies. TAC voted to approve the bylaws.

Vice Chair: Muise nominated Jeff Maxtutis to serve as Vice Chair of TAC through June. TAC elections will occur after June for the next term. TAC voted to approve Maxtutis as Vice Chair.

Arlington High School TAC/ABAC Working Group: There is much interest from ABAC and the East Arlington Livable Streets group (EALS) on bicycling issues related to the reconstruction of the high school. A couple of members from ABAC will be invited to participate with the TAC working group. TAC members were not comfortable with having EALS as part of the committee, but they can attend any meetings as members of the public. Scott Smith said he does not plan to serve on the working group. The scope of the group will need to be defined, but it will look at access to the high school for all modes, including pedestrian and bicycle access.

Crosswalk on Summer at Buzzell Field/Victoria Street: Rateau and Chouinard noted there will be a need to restrict parking near this crosswalk for at least 20' to ensure good sight distance. They will review further and bring back a formal recommendation at the next meeting for a vote.

TAC Social: Muise noted the social will be in February or March. He is still looking into venues to host it.

Crosswalk on Academy at Maple: Chouinard noted constructability concerns with a crosswalk at this location. New ramps were put in recently and they would need to be removed and replaced to accommodate a crossing. The stairs to the Freemason building restrict ramp installation as well. TAC members noted there should be a count to determine how many people are actually crossing here. There is currently construction at the Senior Center and it is unclear how many people are walking there. A traffic gap analysis was recommended. TAC tabled further discussion on this until next meeting.

Entry Restriction on Glenburn at Park: Chouinard said his understanding of the count request was the turns off Glenburn onto the side streets, not necessarily the turns from Park onto Glenburn. Based on the data DPW collected in the fall, for three hours during an evening rush hour, TAC members noted only around 200 vehicles were traveling on Glenburn Road at that time. 69 turned onto Eustis, 112 onto Bellingham, and 34 onto Fayette. This is a low amount that is consistent with other local streets in Arlington during a rush hour period. TAC members also noted that there was little time benefit from traveling through the neighborhood here. Although the consensus is that volumes are too low for an entry restriction, a vote was not scheduled for this meeting. TAC will vote on this issue next meeting.

Autonomous Vehicle Testing: Amstutz explained that Arlington is part of a working group organized by MAPC and MassDOT to create an application program for testing

autonomous vehicles in municipalities in the state. As part of being on the working group, the Town has agreed to identify areas within its municipal boundary where AVs could be tested. MassDOT provided a guidance document with criteria to help identify these areas. Amstutz presented the document to TAC members and asked for feedback. TAC members discussed the document and the criteria. The criteria are very restrictive and not all the criteria can be fulfilled by one street in Arlington. The criteria are for a very simple AV test and the streets in Arlington have too many complications for a low-level AV. Based on the criteria provided, TAC members concluded that they could not recommend any locations at this time. There are other complications, such as poor pavement on private roads and roads with steep inclines in the Heights, that aren't touched upon by the guidance. Amstutz will write back to MAPC and MassDOT to note these concerns and follow up on their request for testing locations.

The meeting being at the end of its scheduled time, the remainder of the agenda items were tabled until the next meeting in February.

Howard Muise adjourned the meeting at 10:15 pm.